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ABSTRACT

The World's Largest Math Event (WLME) 4 is the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics' (NCTM) celebration of mathematics and mathematics education and is the highlight of Mathematics Education Month. This year's event is slated for April 30, 1998 with the theme "Landmarks: Seeing the World by Numbers". This theme encourages students to consider famous man-made structures and the numbers and mathematical concepts associated with them including distance, weight, volume, and cost. This document features 12 activities related to this theme that can be chosen by teachers on April 30, 1998--or any other day--to investigate with their students. Contains 23 references. (ASK)

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Landmarks:

SEEING THE WORLD BY NUMBERS

ED 429 843

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Landmarks

SEEING THE WORLD BY NUMBERS

The World's Largest Math Event (WLME) 4 is NCTM's celebration of mathematics and mathematics education and is the highlight of Mathematics Education Month. This year's event is slated for 30 April 1998 with the theme "Landmarks: Seeing the World by Numbers." This theme encourages students to consider famous human-made structures and the numbers and mathematical concepts associated with them, including distance, weight, volume, and cost.

Introduction

The goal of WLME 4 is to continue the spirit of celebrating with students and teachers from around the globe that mathematics is a vital part of life itself. WLME 4 will be a success if grades K–12 students around the globe participate in this enriching, mathematics-related event. The activities for WLME 4 fall into three major groupings: World Landmarks, National Landmarks, and Landmarks Closer to Home. Teacher notes and solutions follow the activities. You can get more students involved and make the event an even greater success by promoting WLME 4 through your local media. See the last page of this booklet to find out how.

Choose one or two activities that will interest your students and explore those activities on 30 April 1998. (If you cannot participate on the day of the event, we encourage you to use these activities at another time.) Embellish them with your own knowledge and information about the theme. Place the poster—the outer page of these materials—in a prominent place in your classroom. After completing the activities, please mail in the attached evaluation card. This information will be used by NCTM to help create WLME 5 for 1999. Your ideas are important!

Finally, please extend WLME 4 beyond your classroom. Have students discuss with their families some human-made monuments and structures. From a historical statue in your neighborhood to the Skydome in Toronto, mathematics plays a major role in the design, construction, and maintenance of these structures. Visit the NCTM Web site at www.nctm.org for additional activities and ideas to support the WLME 4 theme. Or call our Fax-on-Demand number, (800) 220-8483, and request document #215 (WLME 4) or document #216 (additional activities). Permission is granted to reprint the WLME 4 materials for nonprofit educational purposes.

The NCTM committee members who developed the WLME 4 classroom materials were Daniel Brahier, Connie Laughlin, Jane Martain, Roy Barnes, and Melfried Olson.

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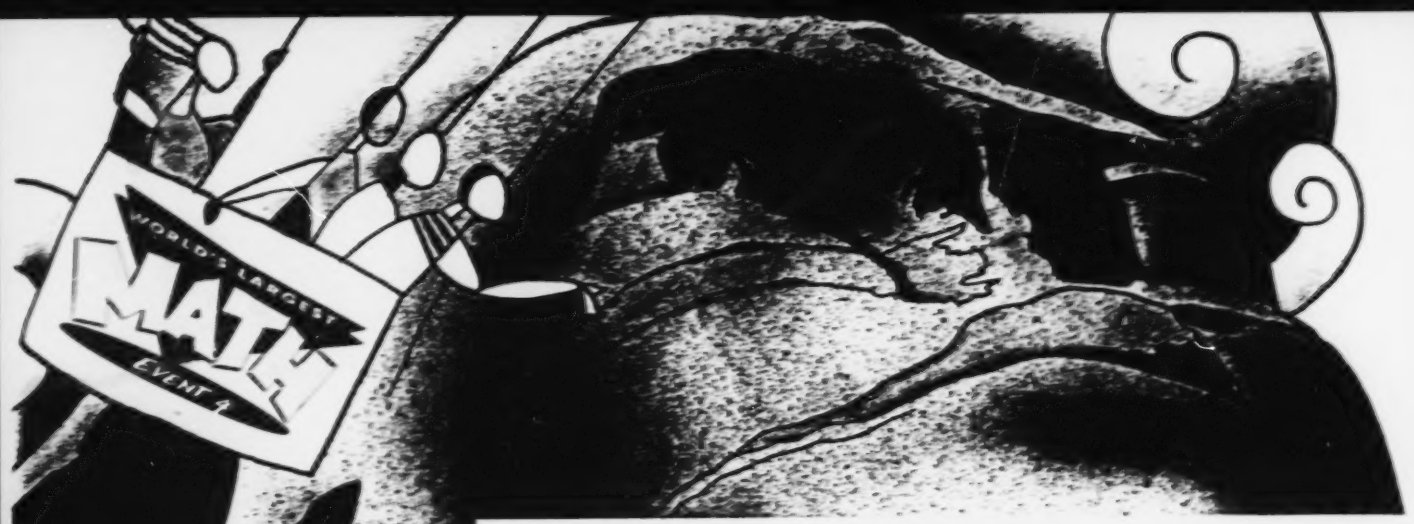
World Landmarks

The Pyramid of Khufu (kōō´ fōō) near Giza, Egypt, is the only one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World that is still standing. Nestled near the Pyramid of Khafre (Kăf´rā) and constructed almost 4500 years ago stands the Sphinx. This structure, carved out of the bedrock, features the head of a man (probably a likeness of the pharaoh himself) and the body of a lion. The size and features of this monument and its surrounding pyramids provide fertile ground for the study of mathematics.



Putting Things into Perspective

On your classroom floor or other suitable location, use the information below to mark off the features on the face of the Sphinx:

- The mouth of the Sphinx is about 2.1 m (7 ft) long.
- Its face is about 4.2 m (13 ft 8 in) across, from ear to ear.
- The distance from the base of the Sphinx's nose to its top is about the height of an Egyptian at the time it was constructed—roughly 1.5 m (5 ft) high.
- The diameter of each eye is about 1.8 m (6 ft).

(a) Have the students work with a partner to measure the distance across their mouths from side to side. How many student "mouth measures" does it take to equal the distance across the mouth of the Sphinx?

(b) Students should approximate the "straightline distance" from one of their ears to the other. How many student "ear-to-ear measures" does it take to equal that of the Sphinx? How does this number compare to the number found in part **a**?

(c) Have students stand with their arms extended and fingertips touching to form the outline of the face of the Sphinx. Assume the face is a circle and the "ear to ear" measure is the diameter. How many students are needed to form the outline?

(d) If students' mouths were as big as that of the Sphinx, how long would their feet be if the proportion was the same as found in part **a**? How tall would the students be? Have the students use a piece of string to measure the circumference of their ring fingers and use the information to make a paper ring that would fit on the finger of a person whose mouth was as large as that of the Sphinx.

(e) Suppose that the Sphinx had a cold and needed a tissue. Measure the dimensions of a tissue and determine the size that it would have to be for the Sphinx's nose, using the ratio found in part **a**.

2. How Big Is It?

The Sphinx is about 73.2 m (240 ft) long (including the paws, which are each 15.3 m [50 ft] long) and 20.1 m (66 ft) high from the base to the top of the head. Suppose that the Sphinx were sitting next to your school building.

Would your school be longer or shorter than the Sphinx? Which would be taller? How many students in your class would have to stand, side by side, to span the entire length of the Sphinx? Would one of its paws fit in your classroom? Would a paw fit in a school hallway?

3. Gazing at the Pyramids

The Pyramid of Khufu (also known as Cheops [kē ŏps]), standing near the Sphinx, was also constructed about 4500 years ago and is the largest pyramid in the world. The following questions deal with the geometry of pyramids.

(a) Have students decide which of the following nets can be folded to form a square pyramid.

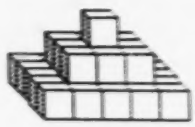
(a) **(b)** **(c)**

(d) **(e)** **(f)**

(b) Have students make a square pyramid out of paper, tracing over and cutting out one of the figures above. Can students paint the *edges* of their pyramid with one continuous stroke of a brush covering each edge exactly once? What is the fewest number of crayons needed to color each of the five *faces* so that no two faces that touch along an edge are the same color?

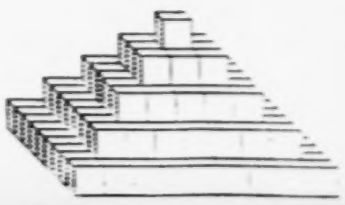
(c) The original Pyramid of Khufu stood 147 m (482 ft) high, and its base was a square that measured 230 m (756 ft) on each side. Find the length of the slant height and the approximate acute angle the sides make with the desert floor.

(d) When the city of Cairo was built in the tenth century A.D., the outer limestone covering of this pyramid was stripped from its surface to be used as building materials. With this limestone covering removed, a bird's-eye view of the pyramid looks much like the following diagram:



Have students determine the number of blocks in each layer of the drawing. How many total blocks are in the drawing?

How many blocks would there be altogether if the pattern were continued but the bottom layer were a 9×9 square, like that shown here? Determine a formula for the total number of blocks if the bottom layer is an $n \times n$ square, where n is odd.



NATIONAL Landmarks

Every country in the world has some nationally known building or monument that each citizen recognizes and points to with pride. For the United States, one of the most widely recognized, human-made monuments is the Statue of Liberty, located in New York Harbor. The statue was a gift from France and took fifteen years to design and construct. Disassembled into 350 pieces, the Statue of Liberty was shipped from France to the United States on 21 May 1885 in 214 crates. It arrived in New York on 17 June 1885, was reassembled, and was dedicated on 28 October 1886. The statue was designated a National Monument on 15 October 1924. It went through extensive repair and restoration in 1986. The mathematics behind this national landmark is remarkable.

1 Take a Hike

A disabled person, child, or anyone unable to walk up the stairs can take an elevator from the ground to a viewing area at the top of the pedestal. Those who are able to make the strenuous ascent can climb 354 steps (22 stories) to another viewing area at the crown of the statue. People's heart rates increase as they make the climb. The first 183 steps go from ground level to the top of the pedestal on which the statue sits. The next 171 steps are from the bottom of the statue to the top of her crown.

Use a step stool or a block to model a stairstep. Simulate climbing the first 183 stairs of the statue by using this step. First help the student count his or her resting pulse rate. Then have the child climb up and down on the step 25 times, and check the pulse again. Repeat in increments of 25 steps until the child has "climbed" 183 steps. At the beginning and as the child climbs each increment of 25 steps, report the heart rate (beats per minute) to the class. Record the data in a chart, make a graph from the data, and have each child write a heartbeat story based on the graph.

Ask the children to predict what will happen to their heart rate if they climb the remaining 171 steps to the top. Will it probably go up, go down, or stay about the same? Why?

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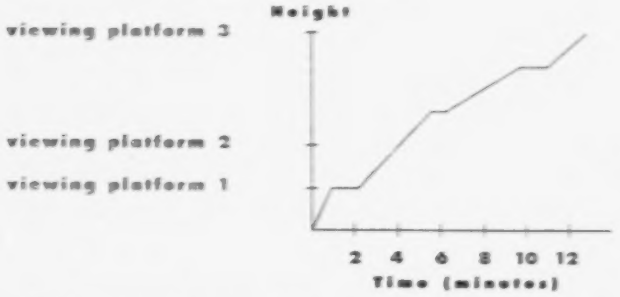
5. A Trip to the Top

The staircase leading to the top has three viewing areas—two on the way up to the top of the pedestal and one at the top of the statue in the crown. It also has several rest stops along the way. The graph below shows Camille's trip on the way up to the top. She was the first in line that day, and so she could make the trip at her own pace.



(a) How many times did Camille stop to rest? Did she stop at the first or second viewing platform, and how can you tell? When was she climbing the fastest? The slowest?

(b) Give each child three sheets of blank paper. On one sheet of paper, have students copy the axes of the graph. On another sheet of paper have them write a one-paragraph story about a trip to the top. Have them illustrate it on the graph they have copied. Each student should then exchange stories with another student in class and draw on the third sheet of paper a graph of that person's story. Compare graphs and stories.

6. A Penny for Your Thoughts

Although estimates vary a great deal, some sources estimate that as much as 90 800 kg (200 000 lbs) of the Statue of Liberty is made up of pure copper. The copper sheeting is 2.37 mm (3/32 in) thick. Use a scale to find the weight of a penny and a ruler to measure its thickness. If the copper sheeting was made into pennies (assuming that pennies are actually made of pure copper), how many pennies could be produced? How high would they stand if the pennies were placed in one vertical stack? How many dollars would the stack be worth?

7. Just Visiting

The National Park Service reports that 4 494 076 people visited the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island in 1996. The cost of riding the ferry to the park and back is $3 for children, $7 for adults, and $5 for senior citizens. Admission to the monument itself is free. Suppose that for every adult who visits the statue, two children visit the statue, and for every child, three senior citizens visit the statue. Approximate the total amount of money spent each year and each day on the ferry service.

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Landmarks

CLOSER TO HOME

In this section, we turn our attention to state, provincial, and local landmarks. Every community has some type of human-made landmark—a statue, a bridge, a sculpture, a school mascot, or a unique building or structure. Students can most easily identify with landmarks that can be found locally. The first activity may be preferable, since it involves students' researching their own local structures. The other activities are provided as alternatives and as examples to help you think about how to investigate your own landmark. We close with a look at the Golden Gate Bridge, which serves as both a local and a national monument.

In Your Backyard

Identify a landmark that is located in your area. Ask the students, "What do you wonder about that landmark?" and how they might find out. Either the teacher or groups of students should research the landmark to determine why it was constructed, what it cost, its physical characteristics, and so on. Students should make a presentation to the class about this landmark and include a set of mathematics problems that can be solved by using the data they have collected.

Groundhog Day, or How's the Weather Up There?

For one example of how students might explore a local landmark, we turn to the town of Wiarton, Ontario, located 220 km (138 mi) north of Toronto. Wiarton is located on the Bruce Peninsula and is home to Wiarton Willie, an albino groundhog that appears each year on February 2nd. The lore of Groundhog Day has it that if the groundhog sees its shadow, there will be six more weeks of winter, and if not, there will be an early spring. In Wiarton, a statue was sculpted in 1995 to commemorate this annual event. The statue of Willie weighs about 4.5 metric tons (9 900 lbs), and stands 1.9 m (6.25 ft) high. Perched atop its concrete pedestal, it rises to 3 m (9.8 ft). The real Wiarton Willie is about 41 cm (16 in) long and weighs about 4.1 kg (9 lb).

To develop a sense for the statue's height, have students identify structures in the school this tall. How many real Willies would have to be placed on a seesaw to balance the statue on the other end? If the real Willie grew to be as tall as the statue, how much might he weigh?

Elementary school children may also enjoy reading the book It's *Groundhog Day*, by Steven Kroll (1987), or *Geoffrey Groundhog Predicts the Weather*, by Bruce Koscielniak (1995).

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10 A Logical Side Trip

There are many little-known landmarks in the United States that manage to catch the interest of tourists. For example, following is a list of seven "world's largest" landmarks: Killer Bee, Chair, Catsup Bottle, Tire, Egg, Prairie Dog, and Ball of Twine. These landmarks are located (in no particular order) in Branson, Missouri; Winlock, Washington; Anniston, Alabama; Oakley, Kansas; Dearborn, Michigan; Hidalgo, Texas; and Collinsville, Illinois.

Use the following five clues and a map of the United States to determine which landmark is located in which town:

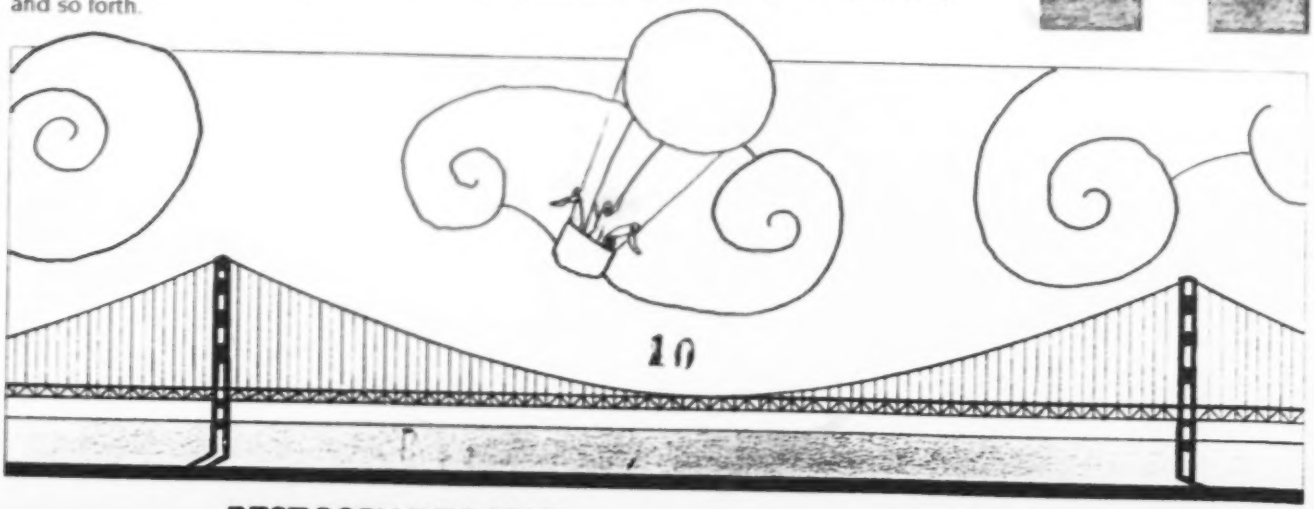
- The landmarks in Kansas and Texas represent living things.
- The Egg and the Tire are in states that border Canada.
- The first letters of the towns containing the Prairie Dog, the Catsup Bottle, the Killer Bee, and the Egg (in no particular order) spell the word CHOW.
- The latitude at which the Prairie Dog is located lies between the latitudes of the locations of the Killer Bee and the Egg.
- The Tire and the Ball of Twine are in states that start with the same letter.

THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE

The Golden Gate Bridge is a widely known landmark in the San Francisco area. After four years of construction and nearly $27 million, the bridge opened to the public on 27 May 1937. At the time, the structure was the longest suspension bridge in the world, spanning 1 966 m (6 450 ft) across the bay that connects San Francisco to the counties north of the city. Subsequently, two longer suspension bridges were constructed in New York and in England. A longer bridge (the Akashi-Kaikyo) in Japan is to be completed this year.

11 Using the Image-ination

Ask the students to look at these pictures of the Golden Gate Bridge and identify all the geometry that they see in the pictures. For example, they may identify geometric shapes; acute, obtuse, or right angles; parallel and perpendicular lines; examples of symmetry; and so forth.



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Up, Up, and Away

The Golden Gate Bridge is a suspended road, supported by two towers. These towers rise 152 m (500 ft) above the roadway and a total of 227 m (746 ft) above the water in the bay. Suppose that a worker was fixing a rivet on the top of one of the towers and her helmet fell off. How much time would it take for the helmet to reach the water? Knowing that the acceleration due to gravity is 9.8 m/sec^2 (32 ft/sec^2), determine the speed of the helmet when it hits the water.

Teacher Notes

Throughout these activities, measurements have been given in both the metric and the English systems. Because of the nature of the information obtained, the conversions from one system to another are only approximations and sometimes differ by a small amount.

1. (a) A range of 40 to 80 student "mouth measures" can be expected in order to be the same as the Sphinx's mouth. (b) Students might find it a challenge to approximate the distance between their ears, since it can't be measured directly. One method is to take a hat and measure its diameter. An answer between 20 and 35 "times greater" is reasonable. This indicates that the "mouth measure" has a different proportion from that of the "ear-to-ear measure." (c) Between 7 and 11 students will probably be needed to form the circumference of the face. (d) and (e) Students can use the figure found in part (a) and measure their own feet and a tissue to find this answer.

2. The Sphinx would likely be taller than most schools, and a paw would not fit in most classrooms but might fit into a hall, depending on the width of the hall.

3. (a) Nets , , and will fold up into a pyramid. (b) "No" and 3 are correct answers to these network problems. (c) Use the length of the base and the height of the pyramid to create a right triangle to approximate the slant height, 187 m (613 ft), and the angle the sides make with the desert floor, 52°. (d) The pyramid with a 5×5 base would have 35 blocks; the one with a 9×9 base would have 165 blocks; one with an $n \times n$ base would have $1^2 + 3^2 + 5^2 + \ldots + n^2$ blocks.

4. (a) Students' heart rate should increase over time. (b) Depending on the graph, students might predict that their heart rate will continue to increase, or that it has reached a maximum and will stay there.

5. You might ask other questions to help students think about what the graph shows, such as "About how long did the whole trip take?" or "What happened at minute 6?" (a) Camille stopped at the first platform and twice between the second platform and the crown. The steepest interval is between the base and the first platform, so this is when she was climbing the fastest. She was climbing the slowest in the next-to-last interval.

6. Using a classroom scale, we find that a penny weighs a little less than 3 grams. The statue would then make about 90 800 000 ÷ 3 pennies, or about 30 270 000 pennies. If students stack up pennies and measure the height, they will find that 100 pennies is about 14.6 cm, so 30 270 000 pennies would be about 302 700 × 15 cm high. This is approximately 45 km (28 mi) high.

The thickness of the copper sheeting in the statue is about that of two pennies. Students can also consult the newspaper or Web to find the latest wholesale value of pure copper and determine what the materials would cost to purchase today. The price of copper is approximately $1 (U.S.) a pound. So the copper would cost about $200 000 to purchase in today's dollars. The entire statue, including the internal skeletal structure, design, and construction, was built for only $400 000!

7. This calculation results in an estimate of more than $21 000 000! Let a be the number of adults who ride the ferry, then $2a$ and $6a$ represent the number of children and senior citizens, respectively. So a total number of $9a$ people would cross. Since $9a = 4\,500\,000$, $a = 500\,000$. Then the number of children ($2a$) is about 1 000 000 and the number of senior citizens ($6a$) is about 3 000 000. Multiplying each number by the ticket price for that group and adding gives a total of $21.5 million.

Historically, the National Park Service has not kept records of the actual number of adults, children, and seniors that visit the park each year. A study is currently being conducted to determine the ages, nationalities, and languages spoken by visitors.

8. Another way to experience the mathematics in your community is with a math trail. Students might enjoy creating a math trail that leads to the landmark of their choice and including the problems they create for the landmark as the culminating part of the trail. A math trail for the monuments in Washington, D.C., is a part of the outreach materials for *Life by the Numbers*. *Life by the Numbers* is a series coming to PBS in spring 1998 that reveals the crucial role that mathematics plays in all aspects of life. More information—and the outreach materials—can be obtained from most local public television stations, or at www.pbs.org/math, www.mathlife.wqed.org, or www.ti.com/calc.

9. Comparing the given weights of Willie and his statue, we find that it would take about 1100 Willies to balance the statue. Estimating what Willie would weigh if he grew to 1.9 m (6.25 ft) is not a simple task. When we compare heights, the statue is about 4.7 times the height of Willie. But since weight is related to volume and not simply to height, multiplying Willie's weight by 4.7, yielding 19 kg (42 lb), does not give a realistic estimate. Modeling Willie's statue as a cylinder with a height of 6 ft and a diameter of 3 ft and Willie himself as a cylinder with a height of 16 inches and a diameter of 8 inches shows that the volume of the statue is about 23 times the volume of Willie. Thus we might estimate Willie's weight, were he to grow this tall, as 94 kg (207 lb), which sounds reasonable for a six-foot groundhog.

10. Killer Bee, Tex.; Chair, Ala.; Catsup Bottle, Ill.; Tire, Mich.; Egg, Wash.; Prairie Dog, Kans.; Ball of Twine, Mo.

11. Younger students may see triangles and squares; older students may identify other geometric shapes and concepts, such as catenaries, congruence, similarity, or examples of symmetry.

12. To calculate the time it takes the helmet to fall and the velocity when it hits the water requires the formulas $v = at$ and $d = (1/2)at^2$, where a is the acceleration, v is the velocity, d is the distance traveled, and t is the time. Since we know the distance traveled by the helmet and the acceleration, we determine the time to be 6.8 seconds and the speed on impact to be 67 m/s (218 ft/s). Younger students could get a feel for how long a helmet would take to fall several feet by dropping a helmet off the top of a slide on the playground or out of a second-story window of the school building. They could then use that information to help them estimate the time it would take the helmet to fall.

About NCTM

Become a member of NCTM. For more than seventy-five years, we've been promoting mathematics education and professional growth for educators. You are invited to join our ranks and to solicit others to join the association.

NCTM publishes four journals for mathematics educators: *Teaching Children Mathematics*, *Mathematics Teaching in the Middle School*, *Mathematics Teacher*, and the *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education*. Dues support the development, coordination, and delivery of the Council's services. Dues for individual membership are $57 (U.S.), which includes a subscription to one of the four journals and a subscription to the NCTM *News Bulletin*. Each additional journal is $18. Foreign subscribers add $8 (U.S.) postage for the first journal and $4 (U.S.) postage for each additional journal. Special rates for students, institutions, bulk subscribers, and retired members are available from the Headquarters Office, 1906 Association Drive, Reston, VA 20191-1593. Telephone: (703) 620-9840; fax: (703) 476-2970; Internet: infocentral@nctm.org; Web: www.nctm.org.

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Promoting WLME 4

Promoting the value of mathematics to students is the responsibility of every teacher. On Thursday, 30 April 1998, we ask that you broaden your role to include promoting mathematics to the local community through the media.

The following steps will help you obtain media coverage for the event—coverage that will show the positive activities taking place in your classroom and in your school.

First, make a list of all the local media you want to reach, including newspapers and radio and television stations.

Second, identify the reporters who cover education issues for the newspaper or radio and television stations you want to reach.

Next, write a short (one page) media alert for your local press. Be sure to include who, what, when, where, why, and how. (Note: a media alert is much easier to write than a press release, since it is composed of short tidbits of information. See the sample media alert for guidance in composing your own.)

Type your media alert on your school's letterhead. Be sure to include a contact name and phone number. This will enable interested reporters to contact you easily. Mail the release approximately one week before the event to give reporters time to check their schedules and gather any additional information they may need to cover the story.

Finally, if you do anticipate coverage by your local media, get parental permission for children to be photographed and interviewed prior to the event. This precaution will save reporters time and earn you their gratitude.

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